

People started coming into the room. The TV was turned off and the meeting was started. Just a short time thereafter—5, 6 minutes at the most, as I recall—someone came into the room and grabbed Senator Daschle, who was at the head of the table, took him out and came back in just a very brief minute and said: The building is being evacuated. We all have to leave. There is an airplane headed for the Capitol.

As we left that room, we could look out and see already the smoke billowing from the Pentagon. The airplane had struck the Pentagon.

Now that day was a day I will never forget—never forget. I was taken with Senator Daschle, Don Nickles, who was the Republican assistant leader, and Trent Lott, and we were flown to a classified location. We spent the day there with a number of people, including the Vice President of the United States.

Late in the evening we came back to the Capitol after having been cleared to come back. The Senators gathered on the Senate steps in the Capitol, Democrats and Republicans. We were gathering just to show we were supportive of this great country. BARBARA MIKULSKI, small in stature but powerful in soul, in every way, said so everyone could hear it: Let's sing "God Bless America."

I don't sing very often, but I sang that night. We all did. "God bless America." We did it because we knew it was a day we would never forget. It was a day we wanted to show we were together as Members of Congress.

So as I have said already two or three times this morning, I don't want to ever forget that moment, that day, and I want to make sure we honor the heroes who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. The greatest memorial we have to offer the brave men and women who perished on 9/11, thousands of them, is to simply never forget.

#### TERRORISM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I have indicated, 13 years since the evil attacks of September 11, terrorism continues to rear its ugly head throughout the world. As I speak, the terrorist group ISIS, like a scourge, is plaguing the Middle East. These radical Islamic terrorists are wreaking havoc in Iraq and Syria, butchering the innocent and instituting brutal edicts.

ISIS is a murderous, fanatical organization. It is evil in nature. They must be stopped, and they will be stopped. We will degrade and destroy them.

The Presiding Officer is a general who led hundreds and hundreds of troops to battle in the Middle East. We must honor our troops as indicated in the prayer this morning by our Chaplain because they are going to be called as they are through the air, as President Obama said last night, to do something to degrade and, working with others, to get rid of this scourge.

Last night President Obama delivered a stirring speech to the Nation outlining his blueprint for eradicating this threat without repeating mistakes of the past. We all know the mistakes about which I speak. The President made it clear: We will not rush into another ground war in the Middle East and we will not go it alone to destroy this evil. Instead, America will lead a coalition that includes European and Arab nations in a targeted, strategic mission to destroy ISIS. American air strikes will be supported by local forces that are trained by the U.S. military advisers and others who will assume the duties of defending and protecting their communities and homes. It falls upon us, Congress and the American people, to rally behind the President on his decisive strategy.

There are no ground troops—I repeat—and that is the way it should be. I am confident we will put our political differences aside and work together to give this administration the tools it needs to meet ISIS head-on—not the least of which is the authority to equip and train Syrian troops to fight these very bad—I repeat—evil terrorists.

However, it is disturbing that at a time such as this there are some in Congress taking cheap political shots at the President. Now is the time for us to come together. When tested, Americans have always closed ranks and engaged our adversaries as one united Nation. A matter such as this is no place for political posturing—political positioning. This is time for the rhetoric of campaign commercials to go away. We must draw together as a nation.

When President Bush called upon Congress to do something about the terrible economic crisis that hit this country, we joined together, we joined together as Democrats, Republicans, and Independents and took this head-on. This is the situation now. We must draw together and support the President in eradicating the evil of ISIS, not only for our Nation but the world.

#### PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT— MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Motion to Proceed to S. 2199, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 345, S. 2199, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

REMEMBERING 9/11

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I wish to make some comments about the remarks of our distinguished leader and to join him in calling on Senators to remember this day and historical experience of 9/11 and to commit this body

to our best efforts to help ensure our political institutions and our country remain free and safe for all Americans to continue to enjoy the blessings of liberty, the opportunities of an economic system that is the envy of the world, and to commit ourselves to a new sense of responsibility as representatives of our States, to help ensure this is a reality and not just a hope.

We appreciate the remarks of the leader on this important occasion and ask all Senators to express their views as may be appropriate.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

#### 9/11 TRIBUTE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday I joined Congressional leaders in awarding three Congressional Gold Medals to the memory of thousands of men and women who perished so tragically on this very day 13 years ago. Every American that morning bore witness to the terrible tragedy and suffering. But that was not all we witnessed. We also saw incredible acts of bravery and compassion and heroism. We saw it in a great city. We saw it on the edge of the Capitol. We heard about it high above the clouds. The sacrifices of those heroes of 9/11 inspired us then and they inspire us now. The memory of every man and woman who perished so tragically that day continues to serve as a unifying force for our Nation. We will never stop honoring them.

#### ISIL

Mr. President, the American people have a lot on their minds these days. Among their greatest concerns is the threat of ISIL, the brutal terror group that recently beheaded two American journalists. ISIL is growing stronger by the day and it is lethal. Every day we wait to confront them is a day they grow more deadly. I and others have called on the President to provide us with a comprehensive plan to defeat this menace. Last night, he described to the Nation what our military, intelligence, and diplomatic corps are doing to confront this threat, and outlined ways he will expand on existing operations.

Over the next week, following a series of briefings, Congress will work with the administration to ensure that our forces have the resources they need to carry out these missions. Specifically, the President set forth a near-